

alternative schemes. The first, championed with eloquent conviction by President Wilson, called for a new co-operative system embodied in a League of Nations. "What we seek is the reign of law, based upon the consent of the governed and sustained by the organized opinion of mankind/* The second sponsored by Clemenceau, was based upon the argument that the war had changed nothing except the distribution of power; that force would rule the future as it had ruled the past; that the Germans were incorrigible ; and that the security of France could only be found in perpetuating the weakness of her terrible foe.

The British Delegation stood far closer to the American than to the French programme, though it identified itself with neither school. After four years of desperate strife and unimaginable suffering it was doubtless impossible to make a more statesmanlike settlement than the Treaty of Versailles, for victory is a heady drink. It was not a "Carthaginian peace, as Mr. Lloyd George has demonstrated in his impressive apologia ; yet far-seeing men like General Smuts and Colonel House confessed-how imperfect it was, not least in its lack of large-scale economic planning. Its unexpected severity struck the frail Weimar Republic a blow from which it never recovered, for democracy was identified in many German minds with humiliation and defeat. On the other hand, France was angered by the Anglo-American veto on the separation of the left bank of the Rhine from Germany and on the annexation of the Saar. Thus, while the bells of victory were still pealing, two grave anxieties loomed up on the horizon—the exasperation of a proud people at the harshness of the victors, and the resentment of the French at the frustration of a settlement which in their belief would have

guaranteed
lasting security. ** If we have not the Rhine and
the bridge-
heads over the Rhine," declared Foch, in a
memorable aphor-
ism, " we have nothing." Millions of his
countrymen shared
his attachment to " les frontieres naturelles."

While heading France off the middle Rhine, the
British and
American Governments attempted to sweeten
the pill by a
promise of military support against German
aggression ; and
a Tripartite agreement was signed on June 28,
1919, the
same day as the Treaty of Versailles. The
obligation, however,
was joint, so that, if either guarantor failed to
ratify, the treaty
would be void. When the Senate repudiated the
President,
Great Britain was absolved from her promise,
and she made